

# The Dawn--By Sinclair Lewis

"WELL, Sophy," her mother quavered, "we have to put up with what the Lord provides. I've laid on this bed for fifteen years but I hope I've bore my cross patiently."

Indeed, her pleasure in the hobby of bearing crosses was great enough to be infectious. Sophy's nature had been stiffening again in this parental atmosphere, during her husband's prison term; had been losing the joyous flexibility she had gained from marriage with Will. Yet she still loved him, and realized that his misappropriation of the Joralemon Mill funds had not been viciousness, but impetuosity in the meeting of a mortgage.

"So, your Will's let out of Stillwater today. I says to father, I says: 'Sophy musn't complain under the Lord's burdens, but be cheerful, be cheerful.'" Sophy remembered that Will had pointed out how irreverent was this tolerance of Providence. "Be cheerful," the mother croaked again, funereally, pulling at her faded bangs. "What time's he comin'?"

"I've told you, mother, I don't know just what time."

"What say?" But the mother droned on without waiting an answer. "Pull down the curtain a leetle mite, Sophy. Can't you see the sun's comin' in and hurtin' my eyes?"

Sophy's listless touch merely released the curtain, which flew up and let the April sunshine flood in. It's healthy reality made the mother burrow into the yellow, camphor-scented pillows with betraying energy; while it set astir in Sophy the desire for fresh air and escape from the room, stuffy with drug odors and—prejudices. Pulling down the curtain, she said good bye indifferently, and tip-toed away, toward her cottage.

Sophy's gait slackened as she slipped back into the familiar fear that she was merely going to a life of greater repression. The once buoyant Will had been dried by prison routine and the scorn of the (unbetrayed) virtuous. On her prison visits, which had ceased as an agony to both, he had called her "Sophia," very different from the "Zo" of courtship days, and very like the "Sophi-yar" of her father, who kept his own prison of dry rot at home.

Within the cottage, she wandered slowly about, rearranging the furniture, quite needlessly; for she had carefully cleaned the house on the preceding day, happy in activity. Now that she merely awaited Will's coming, she felt the contrast with their bridal home-coming, and pondered the financial and social difficulties the jail-bird must face. Would he, rather, wouldn't he, fall into crime again, perforce? Suppose he became a deliberate criminal: the bold, bad burglar she had once seen at a melodrama in Minneapolis.

This image was growing in miserable reality when she heard a hasty step thump across the stoop, and the door bang open. Followed, a hearty: "Zo! My little girl!"

Will had come home. And that fear of the dark direction his energy might have to take made his buoyancy more dreadful than would have been the weary: "Well, Sophia, I've come home," which, in still, dreadful hours of sleeplessness, she had imagined as the announcement of his gloomy return.

As she slowly raised her head and looked at him, whitely, mutely, she found him very different from the sallow prisoner she had expected. He was ruddy of face and his well-poised body breathed out the joy of life. He was the Will of old, yet with a firmer manhood in him.

Will rushed on her, lifted her from her rocker. He pressed her so closely that her "Will! My poor, poor boy," broke off in little tremors. He made clumsy, puppy-like play at devouring her, until she was fairly giggling. When she had escaped, he pursued her about the table, clamoring for another kiss. She resisted his merry mood little. But when she had laughed and cried on his breast, and had sung: "I'm so happy, I'm Zo, happy," as he had taught her, and mauled him fiercely with the showy sofa cushions, she dropped back into the old fears.

"We've got to be serious now," she sighed, cuddling her head on his shoulder.

"Oh, we have, have we?" he mocked. "What a serious girl!—Old folks well?"

"As usual—Will! How did you get so husky and tanned?"

"Why, uh, they've had me at outdoor work for nearly a year. You know, I wrote you a little about it. Loading twine and so on. Gee, the wind cer'nly did whistle across from the Mississippi, and I hustled around through the snow till I got as husky as a lumber-jack. Hi-yah! It's good to be he'yer!"

"Way down South in Baltimore, I've got a girl behind the door, 'On a bicycle built for two-oo,'" he chanted.

His mingling of old popular songs made Sophy feel that Will had been forced to dally behind men and had to overtake them; while his strident boyishness made her wonder if the light of larger manhood on him was counterfeit.

"Dear, we must be serious now," she repeated, as he stopped singing to light his pipe, and gaze about him appreciatively.

"My Zo-wo!" he chanted. "Le's not be serious. See how

that climbing rose is beginning to leave out, at the window!"

"But listen! I've been reading every magazine article I could get hold of at the Joralemon library on—on released—convicts. Oh, it's dreadful—how folks stick up their noses—"

"The better to get 'em smashed, my dear," laughed her husband.

"—and then, how they offer you jobs, maybe, but how they have to go and pity you, and that's worse yet. And they won't trust you, just when you need it. And you do deserve it, sweetheart."

"We can face 'em, Zo! We ain't afraid, are we, kidlets!" Will boasted.

"But, don't you see? It isn't just not being afraid of them. I want for us to be respected again. Oh, sweetheart, want folks to give you what you deserve, and see how good you are. And we've got our way to make. It'll be hard, so hard." Her breast shook with catching sobs.

WILL'S manner changed instantly. His new strength was dominant as he dropped to his knees beside her, and spoke with quiet tenderness:

"Dear, I'm not going to try and tell you how sorry I feel for all—for everything. I'm going to show you I can make good. As far as the mun for starting in goes—"

"I've still got a little of Granny's money," broke in Sophy. "But if we could only get away from here and really start in! I don't believe you'd be willing to ask father for money—"

"Bet I wouldn't!"

"—and anyway, he probably wouldn't want to let us have any. He'd say we 'didn't need it,' just like he used to when I was little and wanted shoes or anything. If we only had five hundred dollars!"

"We have! See here."

He pulled from the inside pocket of his vest a roll of bills, yellow-backed, encircled with a rubber band.

"Will! How did you get that?" she cried, with more of terror than surprise.

He grinned enigmatically; and she repeated the question, in urgent pleading. From his end of the sofa, he kicked up his feet like a boy, and tossed up the roll of bills, laughing out: "I got it easy enough, and there's plenty more where this come from. You bet on your Uncle Willum!"

Sophy sprang from the sofa and looked down on him. If he felt any shame, he concealed it by a fantastic wink.

So, it had already happened? He was already a deliberate thief? From her rigid position, Sophy dropped across the sofa. Her revulsion was greater in the remembrance of their merriment. She pressed against the sofa till she could feel every pulse in her body throb, while her clutching hands seemed to press the cushions' fabric into her skin.

Looking down on her dishevelled hair and heaving shoulders, Will felt the great incomprehension which stirs at a woman's tears.

"What is it? Little girl! I oughtn't to be stuck up over having a little money."

She could not reply at first. Though she had a savage pride in being strong enough to wound this dearest one, she kept wondering, too, why she could not speak. She scoured him with her fit of silence, yet she scoured herself for it.

He kept urging, with quiet passion. Too self-contained in his wickedness for humble confession, he seemed to her. Twisting her face up, sideways from the cushions, she flung at him: "You stole it. Oh—already—" Again she buried her lips and longed to take back the words.

"Zo! Zo!" he answered, swiftly stroking her scattered hair. "I made the money fair and square! Listen to me, sweetheart. For God's sake, don't cry that way! I didn't tell you first because I wanted to surprise you. I've earned every cent of the money. I've been out of the pen for thirteen months, and I've been working like the deuce."

"You—what?"

"Put your head here, Please. There, I earned it all—"

"Why didn't you tell me you were out? You wrote— Why didn't you come home?"

"It's like this. I didn't let you know I got the thirteen months off for good behavior, because I wanted to make good before you saw me again. And I had to bum my way out west—I went out west when they let me out—and I knew you'd worry over me riding the blind and bumming my grub."

"You rode the blind—and things?" Sophy was reduced to a repetitional wonder.

"Yump. I hiked out to Montana, along the N. P. You know, I used to tend arc lights before I got my job in the mill office. Well, I certainly struck it rich in Helena and around there. Jobs to burn for electricians. I was stringing wire there when they started to put in a lighting and power plant at Travois City. I was bossing a gang, and the chief gazaboo took an awful shine to me. He saw I could hustle the 'boes, and wasn't hitting the booze—which I cer'nly wasn't, for I was thinking of you all the time. Well,

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"See that shining spot right over Long bridge?" asked Will.  
"Well, that's three things."



# The Doctor's Wife

By Temple Bailey

THE doctor's wife hung up the receiver and stared for a moment blankly into space. Then she tore off her long white gloves, unfastened her lace wrap, and, slipping it from her shoulders, ran across the room and looked into the mirror.

The reflection showed a very pretty but angry little woman. Above the white softness of her chiffon gown her head, with its coronet of fair braids, rose proudly; but her eyes sparkled with something more than animation, and the flush on her cheeks had been caused by a disturbing talk with her husband over the telephone.

"He is not going," she said to the lady in the mirror. It seemed to her that she must voice her grievance. And it was, perhaps, better to tell it to the mirror than to anyone else.

It was such an old grievance. But there isn't much satisfaction in telling things to one's self, and, presently, the doctor's wife fastened her wrap and went out of the front door and down the steps and across the street to a big house where the lights shone hospitably.

"I just had to come over," she said when she was safely upstairs in the big living room, "and tell you all about it, mother."

"I am glad every one is away," her mother said. "What is the matter this time, Hilda?"

"It's the same old thing," the girl broke out passionately. "Tonight we were going to the theater, and I was all ready, and he was to telephone me from his office when he would send the car for me, and at the last moment he couldn't go. Somebody had broken an arm and they wanted him at the hospital."

"Well," her mother said gently, "you did not expect him to leave a man with a broken arm, did you, just to go to the theater with you?"

"Just to go to the theater with me," Hilda sat up her hands clasped tensely in front of her. "Why, mother, we have not been anywhere together for ages—it's always somebody, I never have him and we are growing apart, mother, we are growing apart." She dropped back in her chair as she said it and began to cry, great heavy sobs that shook her. "Some women are made to be wives of such men, but I am young; I want pleasure, I want happiness, mother."

As best she could, her mother soothed her. It is so useless for mothers to preach; they know perhaps that out of self-sacrifice, self-denial, may come deep serenity. But there is little that the old can tell the young, for the young will not believe.

"He thinks of everybody else," the girl sobbed, "but me."

"Sometimes I wonder," her mother said, "if out of his love for humanity he may not have a deeper love for you, Hilda. If you could only love humanity, too, it might be help."

Hilda shook her head. "I want to have a good time before I am wrinkled and gray-headed and old—what has humanity done for me, that I should worry about it?"

They were silent for a little while after that, a silence broken, presently, by the tinkle of the telephone.

She came back radiant. "It's Max," she said, "and while it will be too late for us to go to the theater, he wants to take me down town and have supper at some of the big restaurants. I am going over home to put on my hat and he will call for me there."



"You must go," she whispered

She kissed her mother and ran across the street to find on her own steps a shabby woman with pinched features and big sad eyes. The maid, who had answered the door, explained that the woman wanted the doctor, and that she had said he would not be home for some hours. It was a sick baby.

Hilda, her white skirts held up and showing her small slippers tripped past the pair into the hall. "You will have to get another doctor," she said airily.

"Yes," the woman said faintly and started down the steps. Suddenly, however, she clutched the railing and the maid ran to support her. "I think she is ill herself, ma'am," said sympathetic Wendela. "Perhaps she had better come into the house a minute."

And then Hilda did a very hard-hearted thing. "I

don't want her to come in," she said. "Can't you put her on the car, Wendela?"

The round face of the little Swedish girl showed astonishment. "But she is sick," she gasped.

Hilda wavered. She knew if she let the woman in, and if her husband came home, he would go to the rescue of that sick baby; and there were other doctors. She did not feel that she was utterly selfish; it was not just for the pleasure that she wanted to go. They had been so long separated, and then he needed the rest. He was tired—why should he think always of others?

Suddenly the woman turned and looked at her. "If it was your baby?"

Hilda looked back at her with a white face. That was what had made her so eager for pleasure—her loneliness. If only the baby had lived—and yet all her husband's skill, all the skill of his friends had been powerless to save it. And now she was not willing to help to save this other woman's baby. She was going to condemn another mother to loneliness like her own—perhaps greater than her own.

SHE ran down the steps and helped the little maid.

Together they brought the half-fainting woman into the house, and placed her in front of the bright fire in the reception room. Then Wendela went for hot food while the disappointed wife knelt—her satiny robes white against the dark rug—and chafed the cold hands.

"As soon as the doctor comes," she soothed, "he shall go to your baby."

It seemed to her now that he could not go too quickly. All at once she saw the greatness of his work, of the part that she might have in it. She could strengthen him, rest him—but she must not lure him from the wonderful art of healing.

She heard the noise of his machine as it drew up in front of the house and went to the door to meet him. He was radiant, the light of anticipation in his eyes.

"Are you ready?" he asked, as he kissed her.

"Oh, Max," she faltered, "there is a sick baby."

At once his face changed. The light of the lover died out of his eyes, into them came that other light—the light that burned to illumine the darkness in the lives of others.

And suddenly Hilda felt an awe of him, an understanding of what he meant to the world. She must share him with the world.

"You must go," she whispered. "Poor little girl," he said tenderly, "it is too bad to disappoint you." But she smiled at him bravely. "It is such a little thing—my disappointment against a baby's life."

He heard the new note in her voice, and looked at her quickly. "What is it, dear?" he questioned.

"I have been so selfish," she declared, "but I would marry a doctor, Max, so I must take the consequences."

Then she went back to the woman at the fireside. "The doctor will take you with him," she said, "in his machine."

The poor creature, warmed and well fed, thanked her. And after they had gone away Hilda went back and again looked into the mirror. The face that she saw there was flushed and the eyes sparkled, but this time it was not the flush of anger nor the sparkle of indignation. It was rather the exultation that comes after conquest, for that night the doctor's wife had fought her battle and had come into her own.

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damn' if he didn't call me up to his office an' make me his assistant when the plant started up. How does that strike you, kitten?"

Sophy expressed the manner of striking by a tense hug, with nervous little pattings of his cheek.

Then she asked in returning bewilderment: "But how in the world did your letters—? Will! Are you telling me the truth?"

"You know, I didn't write what I was doing, much. I mailed the letters from Montana to a trusty at the pen, that sent 'em to you, so's you wouldn't know I was out. Little girl, you don't know how hard it was—" he choked a little, "—to be out and not make a bee line for you. And it didn't seem square—rushing out to them mountains—Lord, Zo, you ought to see 'em and our little house! . . . Hiking out there while you had to stay with the old folks. But it certainly worked out fine and dandy, and now I've got the new start!"

"My hubin!" was all she said in reply.

"Let's feed," suggested Will. He helped set the table; and in the little Fort Snelling vase, souvenir of their bridal trip, he put a cluster of leaves from the climbing rose. The familiar table-ware—the spoon-holder the knicked tea-pot, Will's mustache-cup—brought out the beloved household jests. It was at once a recovery of home and a new bridal supper. But Sophy could not instantly break with

the familiar gloom. Indeed, now that there was prepared an answer to each of the old, troublous questions, in remembering them she felt the sensuousness of melancholy.

"Wouldn't 'they' find out about the penitentiary out west? Wouldn't that destroy the superintendent's trust?"

"Oh, I told him, and the old man, too—president of the company, that owns the plant. Well, the old man, he says to me: 'Guess we'll treat you better'n them Joralemon Mill folks.' And the boss, he takes me up to his shack for supper, and he tells me that he done time in Joliet, himself!"

"And yet he's superintendent!"

"Well, no—not now he ain't. Can't say 'se he hung on."

"What? Will—" she began tearfully.

"Because I'm the superintendent now! Boss of the whole works, the whole darned cheese! Ker-man got a better job at Shomini Falls, and the old man put me on the job, just last week."

Supper was over. Arm about waist they walked to a window, to gaze at the vast, clear gold and orange of the Minnesota sunset. There was a particular spot of brightest gold, toward the north-west.

"See that shiny spot, right over Long Bridge?" asked Will. "Well, that's three things. First, it's the part of the sunset they make the stars out of."

"You silly boy!"

"Then, it's right over our new house, way out west, to show us how to get through the mountain passes. And then, it ain't a part of the sunset at all, it's our dawn. How'd that thing go I had to recite at the Methodist Literary society?"

"Dawn"—no, uh—"Day, faster and more fast, O'er night's rim—"

Gee, won't it peeve the old hens around here not to be able to drop in and pity you!"

As she laughed with him, in the sheery dusk, the bond of repression about Sophy's brow was broken asunder.

## Why The Regiment Was Moved

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moved at great expense, merely to keep the soldiers in motion, and to give them experiences in different climates? That is what we did with those two cavalry regiments. The one at Louisville needed a change to the north, and the one at Fort Meade needed a change to the south; and they needed the change precisely at that time, as I realized, as soon as you told me your story."

The human secretary of war is still living. The lady whose life was saved is still living in Indiana. This is a true story of the moving of two regiments in order to save a life; a movement which subsequently gave to the official life of the capital city one of the most gracious and lovely of ladies, one who often spoke to intimate friends of the time when the human secretary rescued her.